

WHEN LOVE IS BLIND

The Experience of Wealthy Brodie L. Duke with a "Woman with Schemes."

MARRIED IN HASTE, REPENTS AT LEISURE.

Takes a Wife Under What Is Said to Be Peculiar Circumstances—His Family Object and the Investigation Brings Out Some Startling Statements—Was He the Victim of a Deep-Laid Scheme—Rich Victims of Questionable Women.

New York.—Somehow New York overlooked the announcement of the marriage of Brodie L. Duke and Miss Alice Webb on December 21, 1914. The fact that the ceremony was performed by Rev. W. W. Coe, chief assistant of Rev. Charles Parkhurst, of Madison Square Presbyterian church, who became famous some years ago because of his crusade against vice, ought to have attracted attention. Ordinarily the mere name of Duke would have been enough to excite gossip. For Brodie L. Duke is the half-brother of James B. Duke, the head of the American Tobacco Trust.

It was James B. Duke who, starting in a small way at Durham, N. C., founded the tobacco trust and made it the great power that it is. Since that day James B. Duke's progress to wealth has been phenomenal. The trust virtually controls the entire tobacco business of this country, and several years ago invaded England and fought the big tobacco interests there to a standstill.

James B. Duke is the sturdy, square-jawed, silent type of man, who gives the impression of force, but carefully avoids notoriety. There are a dozen men connected with the Tobacco Trust who are more talked about than he and whose real achievements as money makers and business organizers are not half so great. Lately he has built a palatial country place at Somerville, N. J., where he now makes his home. He, too, not long ago married a wife who was unknown to the society of millionaires, which men of his type usually aspire to enter in New York.

Brodie L. Duke is quite a different type of man. Through his family relationship he has shared to some extent in the good fortune of James B. Duke, and has had the reputation of being wealthy. But most of his life has been spent in hard work in North Carolina, and the attractions of New York proved too much for him. He is said, in fact, to have dissipated a large part of his fortune before his marriage and to have been a frequent cause of anxiety to his family.

After the Ceremony. Two weeks after the quiet little ceremony at the home of Rev. W. W. Coe, a mysterious patient was taken one night to the psychopathic ward of Bellevue hospital. Every care was taken to conceal the identity of the patient. It was not until the next day, when the detectives of District Attorney Jerome appeared at the hospital and demanded the delivery of some \$40,000 in stocks and bonds, and a quantity of valuable jewelry, that it was revealed that Brodie L. Duke's family had taken steps to have him declared irresponsible. The next step was to re-



Mrs. Alice Webb-Duke and Her Husband.

cure his commitment to a private sanitarium at Flushing, L. I., where he was put under close guard.

Then the circumstances of Duke's marriage became public, and two days later suit was brought for the annulment of the marriage. To one of his sons Duke frankly expressed amazement when told that he was married.

"I didn't know that I married Miss Webb," he is reported to have said. "I don't remember having asked her to marry me, nor do I recollect appearing before the minister with her. It is all very strange."

At Bellevue hospital they said plainly that Duke was suffering from alcoholic dementia, and it was even intimated that his condition might have been brought about by the use of drugs. Naturally, Mrs. Alice Webb Duke had quite a different story to tell, and her friend, Mrs. Agnes Desplaines, bore her out in most of the details. But it happened that private detectives employed by the Duke family and the detectives from District Attorney Jerome's office had unearthed enough of the records of the two women to cast strong suspicion on them, and the grand jury was put to work investigating the matrimonial tangle.

leave the place. For awhile she went into hiding, but when at last she was located she told a story in which sentiment and business was strongly mixed.

Mrs. Duke has all along claimed to have large property interests. She is about 50 years of age, perhaps five years the junior of her husband. For several years she has figured as a promoter of a certain kind of industrial concern of more or less magnitude. Her business correspondence is written on nicely engraved stationery, under the heading of "The Texas-Cuba Tobacco Company," of which Alice M. Webb figures as the president. The offices of the concern are in the Continental bank building, of Chicago, and, according to Mrs. Duke, it owns a considerable area of tobacco land in Texas. She is also interested in the firm of Taylor, Webb & Co., which has its headquarters with the tobacco concern. Mrs. Duke is the Webb of the firm. It is engaged in promoting all sorts of projects and stock enterprises. According to Mrs. Duke, her first meeting with her husband came about in the way of business.

A High Priestess of Finance. "I have large property interests in Texas," she explained, after her husband

had been committed to the hospital. "It was in connection with these that I came to New York from Chicago in the latter part of November. I wanted to secure additional capital to develop the property, and naturally I meant to seek wealthy investors. Of course I heard of the Dukes as men of wealth.

"On arriving in New York, I sent a telegram to Brodie L. Duke, asking him for a business appointment. By mistake my message fell into the hands of his brother, who came to see me at the Astor House. When I discovered that he was not the man I expected to meet, I told him my message had been intended for Brodie L. Duke. Then I explained what my mission was, and before leaving he made me an offer of \$15,000 a year for my services in his business affairs. I declined the offer after telling Mr. Duke that my services were not for sale.

"Then I sent a second telegram to Brodie L. Duke, at Durham, N. C., and we met for the first time at the Astor House. I explained my business proposition to him, and he expressed great in-

terest in it. I met Mr. Duke by appointment a number of times, and he made inquiries about me and my business affairs. One day, to my great surprise, he said to me:



Not Uncommon in New York.

since she left the Erie county orphan asylum in Buffalo. The New York police say that Alice Webb first came to that city in 1878 to begin a life full of excitement. One of the first incidents in her career that brought notoriety to her was her attempt to shoot a man named Murat Masterson, who represented himself to be a wealthy Arizona miner. The two had been associates for some time, and their quarrel was the ordinary case of jealousy so common among people of a certain class. Masterson and Alice Webb were arrested, but as neither would make a complaint both were discharged. This was in 1890.

Three years later the woman brought a suit against George W. Hopkinson, a wealthy manufacturer of perfumery, for alimony. According to affidavits now on file, Hopkinson lived at a fashionable hotel in New York city in 1877. He had been introduced to a woman calling herself Alice Osborne, who told him that she had been married to a man called Osborne, and afterwards been charged with "endeavoring to blackmail Mr. Osborne's estate." Hopkinson induced Alice Osborne to leave the Desplaines

family. He readily consented to put up the capital for the development of a large tract of land on which I had an option. In the meantime, to show good faith, Mr. Duke had a certified check made out and deposited it with his lawyer. He also entered into negotiations for \$20,000 for the purchase of the land.

"When Mr. Duke and I were discussing our coming marriage one day I asked him if his brothers and sons were likely to raise any objections to it. He said: 'The family home is mine, and my relatives will respect you, or have to get out of it.'"

Mrs. Duke also had much to say about the plans she and her husband had formed for building a church in Durham, N. C., and improving the condition of the poor people of the great tobacco city.

Denies Drinking Stories. "I want to deny emphatically," she said, "all the reports about Mr. Duke and me indulging to excess in drinking, and that we were often in an intoxicated condition together. It is all a wicked falsehood, and intended by the members of the Duke family who have been persecuting me ever since my marriage to Mr. Duke to destroy my good name. I consented to an early marriage at the urgent plea of Mr. Duke. The following day we went on with our business arrangements, but Mr. Duke contracted a severe cold and his condition became so serious that I thought it safest to have the doctor give all of his time to him."

"A Beautiful Marriage. Mrs. Agnes Desplaines, who has figured as Mrs. Duke's closest friend, has called the Duke marriage a "beautiful" one. She declares that Miss Webb is a very capable business woman, and that when Mr. Duke came to see her "it was a case of love at first sight, for they soon stopped talking about tobacco." According to Mrs. Desplaines, the clever Miss Webb was all business, but the second time Mr. Duke called on her he insisted upon marrying her.

"Finally," said Mrs. Desplaines, "he refused to talk business. Then Miss Webb saw it was no use to refuse, and as she really loved him, she at last consented to marry him. She was afraid his family would object, but Mr. Duke waved her objections aside and declared he would never be satisfied until he got her. It was a hasty courtship and a hasty marriage. Only three days elapsed between the first visit and the second when he proposed marriage. If any woman could make a man happy she is the one. Now they have torn him away from her in the very midst of their honeymoon. It

boarding house. She set up an establishment of her own and lived in considerable luxury. Some years later, when Hopkinson tried to drop her acquaintance, he took the precaution to have papers duly drawn up and signed in the presence of his attorney. The woman acknowledged that she had never been his lawful wife, and for two or three years he heard nothing more of her. Then he began to receive gentle requests for money, and in 1893 the woman, as Mrs. Hopkinson, began her action for alimony against him, saying that she had married Hopkinson on November 24, 1878, when she was 18 years old. Hopkinson denied ever having married her, said that she was at least 25 years old at the time he met her, and generally exposed the woman's character in court. The questionable authenticity of her marriage resulted in his attorney having the suit dismissed in 1895.

It has also been learned in the investigation of the woman's record, that Alice Webb married Edward H. Powell, a hotel clerk, in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1895. Powell is now believed to be in Chicago or Allegheny City.

The "Doctor's" Story. Further light was thrown on this remarkable case by a man named "Dr." E. T. Osbaldeston, who was employed as a nurse in the Duke apartments during Mr. Duke's indisposition after his marriage. He told the criminal authorities that when he first saw Duke he was under the influence of liquor or drugs. "Mrs. Desplaines," he testified to the district attorney, "mixed something, put what looked like whisky in one glass, and took from another what seemed to be milk. Soon after this was given to Mr. Duke, he fell back on his pillow, his jaw dropped and he was asleep and breathing hard." The nurse also declared that on the day before the marriage he found Duke so near death that he insisted that



The Morning After.

a doctor be called. The next day Mrs. Desplaines told him Duke and Miss Webb had gone away to be married, and the day after the marriage, so Osbaldeston told District Attorney Jerome, Mrs. Duke came to him and showed him her marriage certificate, saying:

"Now address me as Mrs. Duke with the \$20,000,000. Oh, my God, what I have gone through and suffered in the last few weeks to get this I can't tell you. But, thank God, it is over."

It is a curious part of this extraordinary case that nearly everybody connected with it has a record. Osbaldeston admits that he was once arrested in Montreal with a woman named Louise Weiss, who was accused of theft, and that he spent several years in an insane asylum there. In August, 1892, he was shot while investigating a suspected thief in New York city. Later he had a silver plate inserted in his skull to cover the hole made in it by a colored man who shot him while he was thus engaged in another raid. In 1901 the same woman went to Germany where Osbaldeston followed her. There in the course of his life of adventure he was assaulted by a man named Weil, whom he shot dead. Osbaldeston was chased by a mob and fired and killed the leader. Subsequently he was set free on the ground that he fired in self-defense. He was also once arrested in Washington, D. C., for extorting money from the owner of a massage establishment, but this case was dismissed.

While the examination of the persons principally involved in the Duke marriage tangle was under way and evidence was being prepared for submission to the grand jury, District Attorney Jerome was informed that Mrs. Duke did not own the valuable tobacco lands in Texas which had figured in her business relations with the impressionable Mr. Duke. She once held title to some property, but it had previously been sold under sheriff's execution for \$350, and instead of being very valuable it was probably worth only about that sum.

In any case, Mrs. Duke declared that she would stand on her rights as a lawful wife and began habeas corpus proceedings for the recovery of her husband from the hospital. The Duke family are equally determined that the separation shall be final, regardless of the mortification and scandal growing out of court proceedings.

The Ways of the City. One fact which has come to light in the course of the inquiry made by the criminal authorities in this case is that there are a number of disreputable women in the city of New York who live in good style, in pretentious quarters, and make it their special business to keep informed about the habits of men of wealth who are given to dissipation and loose living. They maintain elegantly furnished apartments, are women of good manners and pleasing address, and under the pretense of carrying on regular business operations are really concerned with wheeling money out of their victims by fair means and foul. Several of these cases which have been uncovered have been suppressed by the victims for fear of disgracing publicity. The Duke case has gone too far to be suppressed. Whether or not charges of conspiracy can be proved in court, exposure should help to check similar operations by women hanging on the fringes of society.

Lord Nelson and Soap. "As occasional squalor is the worst evil of poverty and labor, so cleanliness should be considered the greatest blessing of luxury and ease," argued Mr. Frank Prindle in expatiating on the moral force of his own business, which is the importation of soap. "However," he continued, "those in the seats of the mighty are not altogether without reproach on this subject. It is a well authenticated fact, if not generally known, that the celebrated Lord Nelson had not washed his hands during the last eight years of his life, and Napoleon shunned a bath as though he was a cat. A clergyman once told me that he believed the expression 'cleanliness is next to godliness' referred to moral cleanliness and that the fashionable daily morning bath was of little consequence to health or habits. We should, he said, make our manners as well as our teeth, make our temper as sweet as our breath, and cut off our pecessities as well as our nails."

—N. Y. Herald.

Examination. "Has your boy passed his examinations for college?"

"Not entirely. He has qualified in his studies, but has yet to pass a physician's examination to determine whether he can stand being teased."—Washington Star.

HUMOROUS NARRATIONS.

In talking to some of his political friends the other day William Hepburn Russell, who is known as the Sunny Jim of politics, emitted a statement that should put him in the Solomon class of wisdom. "Good advice," said he, "is one of those injuries which a good man ought, if possible, to forgive, but at all events to forget at once."

The president gets a good many letters from the men who served under him in the rough riders. This one came recently from New Mexico: "Dear Colonel: I am in a heap of trouble, and I write to see if you can help me out. Last week when I was shooting at my wife another lady stepped in range and I hit her. It was an accident. I wasn't shooting at her at all. I hope you will write to the judge and tell him to let me go."

Admirers of Mark Twain will recall his famous letter to Queen Victoria. According to his own account he once wrote: "I don't know you personally, but I have met your son. He was at the head of a procession in the Strand and I was on a 'bus.' During a late visit to London Mark Twain was presented to King Edward, who showed his appreciation of the American humorist by remarking: 'I have met you before. You must remember. It was on the Strand and you were riding on a 'bus.'"

Senator Depew tells the following story. In addition to the general doctor's word, the story has internal evidences of being genuine: Several men in the smoking-room of a liner were discussing the wonders of navigation. All agreed that the accuracy of the readings was marvelous. At this point a very heavy-looking Englishman interrupted. "I say," he drawled, "it's deuced strange, you know, how they ever find their way over-deuced strange! Now, of course, going back it's awfully simple. They've only to follow the straight white line the ship has made."

Senator Carmack tells this story of a colored man who called on him for legal advice at Columbia, Tenn.: The elder of his church had advised his wife to get a divorce from him, and the negro asked: "If a elder come foolin' round you all's house mixin' up trouble, advisin' yo' wif'r to git a divorce, whad'd you do?" "Take a shotgun and kill him, most likely," replied young Carmack. "Kill him—kill a elder! Den whad'de law do?" exclaimed the client. "Oh, hang yo' head, probably." For a full minute the negro was silent. Then in great disgust he turned to go. As he shuffled along down the steps he turned a perplexed eye on the lawyer and said: "For the Lawd's sake, Mr. Carmack, whad's 'torney is you, anny-hew?"

CURRENT SINGULARITIES.

One of the most remarkable opals in existence is supposed to be a fossil fragment of the cinollosaurus, which once lived in Australia, reaching a length of 40 feet. The specimen, lately brought to New York, weighs 1.150 carats.

J. N. Tilton, a merchant of Bozeman, Mont., left in a will that was probated on October 10 the income of his estate, which will amount to several thousand dollars annually, for the celebration of the Fourth of July with fireworks, flags and bunting.

The following is a translation of a public announcement, which appeared recently in the principal paper of a town in Alsace: "The commune of Hirsingen requires a capable man to wind and lock after the village clock. No salary to begin with, but this will soon be doubled if services are satisfactory."

New Britain, Conn., a bustling city, with 30,000 persons, has only two policemen at work in the daytime—and only one when the chief eats his luncheon. It seems to speak volumes for the orderly disposition of the New Britain people that this has been the condition for so long, and events have only just called attention to it.

TARTLETS OF TALK.

Wise is the wife who has only small wishes to be granted.

Many a woman is not as blond as she is peroxidized to be. Liquor may weaken the voice, though it adds strength to the breath. Love may be blind, but the girl's little brother seldom has to be shown anything about it.

If a woman is permitted to do the talking she is not very particular who does the thinking.

Some politicians roost on the fence most of the time because there are voters on both sides of it.

You may kick, you may shatter a boom if you will, but the hopes of its owner will cling to it still.

Tight shoes cause the blood to mount to the face, yet there are young men who can't imagine why girls blush.

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Sinking Spells, Headaches, Rheumatism, All Caused by Poor Blood—Cured by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills.

When Mrs. Williams was asked for some details of the fearful illness from which she had so long suffered, she spoke as follows:

"Ever since I had nervous prostration, about thirteen years ago, I have had periodical spells of complete exhaustion. Any excitement or unusual activity would throw me into a state of lifelessness. At the beginning my strength would come back in a moderate time, but the period of weakness kept lengthening until at last I would lie helpless as many as three hours at a stretch."

"You were under medical treatment, of course?"

"Yes, when I became so bad that I had to give up my household, in May of 1906, I was being treated for kidney trouble, and later the doctor said my difficulties came from changes of life. I was not only weak, but I had dizzy feelings, palpitation of the heart, misery after eating, hot flashes, nervous headaches, rheumatic pains in the back and hips. The doctor did me so little good that I gave up his treatment, and really feared that my case was incurable."

"What saved you from your state of hopelessness?"

"In July of 1903 I had a very bad spell, and my husband came in one day with a little book which told of remarkable cures effected by a remedy for the blood and the nerves, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. He bought a box for me, and that was the beginning of my return to health. My appetite grew keen, my food no longer distressed me, my nerves were quieted, and my strength began to revive."

"How long did you take this remedy?"

"For two months only. At the end of that time I had regained my health and cheerfulness, and my friends say that I am looking better than I have done for the past fifteen years."

Mrs. Lizzie Williams is now living at No. 416 Cedar street, Quincy, Illinois. The pills which she praises so highly, cure all diseases that come from impoverished blood. If your system is all run down, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are the very best remedy to take. Any druggist can supply them.

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